

## Meiji to slash output of Karl, limit snack to western Japan as sales dwindle

1) Shock waves buffeted fans of the long-selling corn puff snack Karl on Thursday after its maker, Meiji Co., said it will limit the flavors to two and pull it from shelves in eastern Japan beginning this summer.

2) The company said from September, due to dwindling sales, it will only produce its two most popular flavors — cheese and light salt — at a factory in Matsuyama, Ehime Prefecture. The snack, which has become a household name, will also only be sold in prefectures west of Shiga, Kyoto, Nara and Wakayama.

3) “For the past three years, we’ve been mulling what to do with the Karl brand,” a spokesman told The Japan Times on Friday. “Given its long history, we’ve been seeking a way to keep the name alive.”

4) But after looking into the logistics and its profitability, the company decided to end the production of Karl at four factories, keeping only the Matsuyama plant, he said.

5) The company, which also sells the snack in the U.S., said it is considering halting sales there as well.

6) Meiji started selling the corn snack in 1968, first offering cheese and chicken soup flavors. In its nearly 50-year history, some 200 different flavors have been produced, the spokesman said.

7) According to the company, sales of Karl’s corn snacks have been in the red for more than a decade.

8) Retail-based sales hit a record ¥19 billion in the 1990s. Since then, sales have dwindled, losing ground to more popular snacks such as potato chips, the spokesman said. In fiscal 2016, retail-based sales stood at around ¥6 billion, less than a third of its record.

9) “We’ve received various responses to our announcement,” he said, without elaborating.

10) Following Thursday’s announcement, many upset fans took to Twitter to express shock. Some regretted forgetting about Karl or not purchasing more of it.

11) “After hearing the news about Karl being pulled from shelves in eastern Japan, I’m now craving it. ... I didn’t realize I loved Karl so much,” read a message posted by @masumi\_asano.

12) The snack has many fans, including some in high places.

13) Masahisa Sato, an Upper House member of the Liberal Democratic Party, was dismayed by the news.

14) “What? This is such big and sad news. Will I not be able to eat Karl, which I have so many good memories of?” the politician posted on his Twitter account Thursday.【May 26, 2017】



タイトル

dwindle だんだん小さくなる

1)

buffet うちのめす

2)

household name = household word  
誰でも知っている言葉 (物、人、名前)

3)

mull じっくり考える

logistics 物流

profitability 収益性

halt 中止させる

in the red 赤字で

lose ground to ～に立場を譲る、後退する ⇔ gain ground

stand at (数字が) ～である

elaborate 詳しく説明する

upset 混乱した、落胆した

regret ～ing ～した事を悔いる

crave 切望する

be dismayed by ～～でびっくりする

★Ice breaker for active discussion

1. Are you a big fan of Karl?

What's your favorite flavor?

2. When do you like eating snacks?

3. Do you think Meiji made a good decision? Why or why not?

4. Please name some of your memorable snacks. What makes them memorable?

5. Make sentences using the following words: dwindle, household name, mull, profitability elaborate, regret and crave.